

## Warming Up Activities

### 1. In a nutshell

#### Aims:

- Communication
- Focus on self
- Focus on present

Estimated Time: 10 minutes

#### Instructions:

- Phase 1: Suggest that someone describes in a word or a sentence how they feel right now.  
Who wants to start?

Estimated time: 10'

#### Notes for the animator:

- ✓ This activity is also appropriate for the end of a meeting, as well as after an intense experiential experience, personal or collective.

Taken from the book: “205 experiential activities for the encouragement of groups” by Zana Archontaki – Dafni Filippou. Kastaniotis Publications.  
Original Title: “205 βιωματικές ασκήσεις για εμπύχωση ομάδων”

## Warming Up Activities

### 2. The Ball

#### Aims:

- Get to know each other
- Become active

Estimated Time: 15 minutes

#### Materials:

A soft ball or pillow or a soft object

#### Instructions:

- Phase 1: Suggest that you stand up and form a circle. A person from the group will throw the ball to someone of their choice while at the same time calling them their name. The person that catches the ball continues repeating the same process without taking too much time.

Estimated Time: 10'

- Phase 2: Have we all heard and learn everybody's name? Maybe you don't remember every name. I suggest that we change places and keep on doing that a little more.

Estimated Time: 5'

#### Notes for the animator:

- ✓ The animator starts first showing the activity
- ✓ It is important that everyone takes part. The animator observes if there are persons that don't receive the ball and throws it to them.
- ✓ If the participants don't know each other the name that is called is the throwers name.

#### Variations:

- **The imaginary ball:** The activity can be done without the use of a ball. Instead you can concentrate on mimic.
- **Different voices:** The animator suggests that they throw the ball whispering the name. Then suggests another way (spelling, frightened, etc)
- **Offer something:** Instead of throwing the ball, they offer something (flower, etc)

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## Warming Up Activities

### 3. My Initials

#### Aims:

- Get to know each other
- Provoke discussion
- Communication

Estimated Time: 90 minutes

#### Materials:

Blank paper pages, colors and paintbrushes or colorful markers

#### Instructions:

- Phase 1: Suggest they write their initials in a piece of paper and use them to draw something.  
Estimated time: 20'
- Phase 2: All of the participants show what they made so that everyone sees.  
Estimated time: 10'
- Phase 3: Presentation of the drawings and discussion.  
Estimated time: 60'

#### Notes for the animator:

- ✓ This activity is appropriate for a meeting or a seminar in which you suggest drawing activity, so that the participants are familiarized with materials and overcome hesitance about their drawing skills.

#### Variations:

- **Collage of the initials:** Design the initials and glue images that represent things that we like or describe us.

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## Warming Up Activities

### 4. Forward the message

#### Aims:

- Get to know each other
- Become active
- Communication

Estimated Time: 45 minutes

#### Materials:

Small pieces of paper, pencils

#### Instructions:

- Phase 1: All write take a piece of paper and write their name; having the paper in their hands they move freely in the place until the animator gives a signal and they have to find, they salute each other and then they give the paper to this person and also say three things about themselves. The other person does the same. Then when they have the new person's information they meet another and give the paper as well as the information about the person they met before. That is repeated to as many as possible.  
Estimated time: 15'
- Phase 2: They gather in one place and they start presenting the person whose name is written on the paper they have. At the end the person that was just presented will correct and complement any information that might have changed or forgotten  
Estimated time: 20'
- Phase 3: Discussion on the activity.  
Estimated time: 10'

#### Notes for the animator:

- ✓ The animator has to make sure everyone understood how this activity works.
- ✓ This activity can be used in groups concentrated on communication. In this case they discuss the difficulties of communication and the transfer of messages.

#### Variations:

- **Transfer the message and the object:** Each one choose from a variety of objects and when meeting the other person they provide two reasons for choosing this object. Then everyone has to transfer the information to the others and then present the person whose object the have in their hands.

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## Warming Up Activities

# 5. Expectations

### Aims:

- Get to know each other
- Emergence of desire
- Emergence of themes
- Communication
- Clarification

Estimated Time: 90 minutes

### Instructions:

- Phase 1: The animator suggests they separate in couples.  
Each and everyone will talk for around 5' about what he/she expects from the group.  
Whomever listens will not interfere.  
In the end the group will have another total of 5' to talk with each other freely.  
When the group gets back together, everyone will talk about what they heard from the other members of the group.  
The animator will be able for the time limits.  
Estimated time: 15'
- Phase 2: The group gets back together.  
Every couple will stand up and talk, one at a time, about what they heard from each other and then if something has been omitted, the other member of the couple is able to add it.  
Estimated time: 60'
- Phase 3: Discussion on the activity.  
Estimated time: 15'

### Notes for the animator:

- ✓ The animator will be responsible for the time limits.
- ✓ The animator becomes part of a group if the number of persons is odd and talks for himself/herself and what expects from the group. Differently, presents himself/herself in the end of phase 2.
- ✓ Takes note of the expectations of the participants. Then reformulates what everyone has told and clarifies the aims and limits of the group.

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## Warming Up Activities

# 6. Brainstorming

### Aims:

- Emergence of desire
- Clarifying aims
- Communication

Estimated Time: 30 minutes

### Materials:

Many small pieces of paper, pencils, a basket or box

### Instructions:

- Phase 1: Suggest that everyone takes some pieces of paper and write in each one the first thing that comes to their mind about what they desire about the team. The papers will be anonymous.  
Estimated time: 5'
- Phase 2: Put all the papers in the basket or box and someone will be reading them.  
Estimated time: 10'
- Phase 3: Discussion on what you just heard.  
Estimated time: 15'

### Notes for the animator:

- ✓ The animator takes part in this activity.
- ✓ Issues for discussion: - Notice any common desires?  
- Are there any desires that can be fulfilled directly or in long run?
- ✓ The way this brainstorming is suggested in this activity can be used for other issues as well, because it helps express desires, ideas, solutions etc.

### Variations:

- **Ideas from every three persons:** Every three persons write in big paper pages and present them to the group.
- **Shouting:** Everyone says their desires orally, all together, and someone writes them down in a big paper page.

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# 7. Get to know the place

### Aims:

- Focus on self
- Focus on the present

Estimated Time: 20 minutes

### Instructions:

- Phase 1: Let's all stand up. Move freely around the place. Observe and get to know the place. Take note of the details that you hadn't notice till now. Come in touch with all your senses. Touch, smell, hear the noises around you.  
Estimated time: 10'
- Phase 2: Now each one should find a place and sit there quietly with your eyes closed.  
Estimated time: 5'
- Phase 3: Open your eyes slowly and look around. Whoever wants can talk to all of us.  
Estimated time: 5'

### Notes for the animator:

- ✓ This activity can be used also in the first meeting of the group, because it allows participants to get to know the new place.

### Variations:

- **In touch with nature:** This activity can take place outdoors, if the conditions allow it.

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### 8. The Balloon

#### Aims:

- Become active
- No oral communication
- Bounding of the team

Estimated Time: 15 minutes

#### Materials:

Music

#### Instructions:

- Phase 1: Let's all stand up. Imagine that each one holds a balloon. Move around playing with this balloon.  
Estimated time: 5'
- Phase 2: Continue so that every two of you play together with one balloon.  
Estimated time: 2'
- Phase 3: Now every four of you play together with one balloon.  
Estimated time: 2'
- Phase 4: As in phase 3, but now you are eight people.  
Estimated time: 3'
- Phase 5: Now we all play together with the same balloon.  
Estimated time: 3'

#### Notes for the animator:

- ✓ The animator participates in this activity.

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## Warming Up Activities

### 9. The mirror

#### Aims:

- Become active
- No oral discussion

Estimated Time: 50 minutes

#### Instructions:

- Phase 1: Suggest that each one finds someone else and form a couple. Now stand up facing each other. One of the two makes a move and the other acts like a mirror and tries to mimic the other's move and face expressions as accurately as possible. Make sure that you always have view of the other person and communicate only looking at each other and making moves without talking. Then the animator will ask you to change roles. Decide who will be the mirror and who the person that's being reflected.  
Estimated time: 10'
- Phase 2: Now change roles.  
Estimated time: 10'
- Phase 3: Continue to mirror each other. Which means you can be both the mirror and the person being reflected.  
Estimated time: 10'
- Phase 4: Let's discuss what just happened.  
Estimated time: 20'

#### Notes for the animator:

- ✓ In an activity like this that the body does all the work, take into consideration that sometimes the participants talk, laugh and look at the others. It's essential that the animator reminds the instructions.
- ✓ Issues for discussion: - Is it easy for you to focus on the other person?  
- Is there something that you found difficult to do?  
- In which of the three phases did you feel more comfortable?
- ✓ The animator participates if there is an odd number of people.

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## Warming Up Activities

# 10. Body Expression: The oil

### Aims:

- Become more trustful
- Bounding of the team
- Relaxation

Estimated Time: 35 minutes

### Materials:

Mats or carpet, low lighting, relaxing music.

### Instructions:

- Phase 1: Suggest that everyone closes their eyes and have a more comfortable position. Close your eyes, take deep breaths... Imagine a drop of olive oil. Look at the color of it... Feel the touch of it... the taste... You slowly become like it. Your right foot becomes like made from oil. Your left foot becomes the same... then your whole body... Now you are an oil drop.  
Estimated time: 10'
- Phase 2: You are a drop of oil in a pan. The pan moves to the rhythm of the music and you move as well. You tumble and meet other drops. Each time you meet a new drop you become one and form a bigger drop of oil. As the time goes by you meet all together. Now all of you just stay there as a big drop of oil.  
Estimated time: 10'
- Phase 3: When you feel ready, open your eyes slowly... Find a comfortable position and keep it for a while...  
Estimated time: 5'
- Phase 4: Let's form a circle again. Would someone like to talk?  
Estimated time: 10'

### Notes for the animator:

- ✓ The animator has to know if all the participants have contact with the reality.

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